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Lesson 7 continued:
Teaching your horse Games 3 and 4

Game 3- *The Driving Game*^{#3}

Learning to use your 12-foot *Line*
effectively with phases and hinges

Game 4- *The Yo-Yo Game*^{#4}

How do you know if you are
ready to move on?



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POCKET GUIDE 3



Level
PARTNERSHIP

Pocket Guide 3

Level 1 Ground Skills

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Lesson 7 continued: Teaching your horse Games 3 and 4

Game 3 – The Driving Game^{#3}

The Driving Game^{#3} teaches your horse to yield from a suggestion or a signal using *rhythmic pressure* (without contact), rather than steady pressure, as in The Porcupine Game^{#2} (with contact). You can use it to move him out of your personal space and prepare you and your horse for communications you will use in Games 5, 6 and 7.

Objective

- ★ To teach your horse to yield away from you using *rhythmic pressure*. You will yield your horse backwards, and yield his front end and his hindquarters using signals with your hand, and/or Carrot Stick.

Tools

 Carrot Stick, Halter and 12-foot Line.

Directions

In The Porcupine Game^{#2} your horse yielded because he could 'feel' the steady pressure from your hands or Carrot Stick. Now in The Driving Game^{#3} you will teach your horse

to yield using signals or 'suggestions' using rhythmic pressure. Your horse will move without you touching him – you will only touch him if you have to increase your phases.

In this game, it's important to be able to use a "Schwiegermutter" look (Schwiegermutter means "mother-in-law" in German!). Horses use the Schwiegermutter look when they want to drive another horse out of their space – ears back, intense, sometimes even baring their teeth! You won't be baring your teeth, but you can mimic this look by frowning – pretend you have your ears back!

The Four Phases in the The Driving Game^{#3} are:

- Phase 1 – Use a "Schwiegermutter look" and start rhythmically tapping the AIR (with your hands or your Carrot Stick), as you slowly move toward the Zone of your horse you want to move;
- Phase 2 – keep tapping the AIR, but now more vigorously, getting closer and closer to your horse;
- Phase 3 – keep tapping the AIR, but if your horse has not moved, he'll now feel you rhythmically tapping his HAIR;
- Phase 4 – keep tapping your horse, progressively increasing the tapping so it touches hair, skin, muscle, bone.

Don't underestimate how light Phase 1 needs to be and how firm Phase 4 can be. (Most people make the mistake

of starting too suddenly at *Phase 2* or *3* and never get to *Phase 4* – this teaches your horse to become dull.) Always starting at *Phase 1* gives your horse the chance to move at *Phase 1*.

Step 1. Drive your horse backwards from Zone 1 by tapping the 12-foot Line with your Carrot Stick.

You will do this step first because it helps your horse learn that rhythmic pressure means 'move' away. If you follow these steps he will learn that he can move away confidently, with respect, and *without* fear.

With your horse haltered, hold your *12-foot Line* (half way down the rope) in one hand, and your *Carrot Stick* in your other hand.

Lean forward slightly and give your horse a Schwiegermutter look, as if you have your ears back, just like another horse would.

Start tapping the rope in front of your hand with the *Carrot Stick*. The stick tapping the rope will send energy down the rope, causing your horse to feel uncomfortable. The aim is to have your horse take a step backwards.

Some horses may go sideways, some come forwards, some run in a circle or try to escape, some may toss their heads and not even move their feet! Your job is to stay patient and not move your feet, slowly increasing the taps

and even advancing it up the rope toward the horse until he begins to back away.

The moment he moves backwards, allow the rope to slide through your hand so it does not pull on him, stop the tapping immediately, smile, relax, and wait. Quitting the moment he moved backwards is what lets the horse know he did the right thing.

Note: Don't allow your horse to turn his head away from you or he will stop going backwards. To correct this you would simply bump him straight again with the *12-foot Line* (three bumps would be best).

When teaching your horse something new, the quicker you can quit when he does the right thing, means the quicker he will learn what he needs to do. Waiting and doing nothing after you quit will give him time to think about what just happened.

Signs that your horse has had enough time to think about what just happened will be licking his lips, lowering his head, a soft look in his eye, a big exhale, blinking, sighing, resting a hind leg, or chewing his lips.

When you see these signs you can then begin again with *Phase 1*, tapping the rope.

Your goal is to repeat this whole exercise until your horse understands that tapping the rope means "move

backwards." When you can get your horse to take one to two steps backwards you can move onto the next step.

Step 2. Drive your horse backwards from Zone 1 by tapping the ground.

Now that your horse is beginning to understand what rhythmic pressure means, you can try this technique for driving him backwards.

Hold your 12-foot *Line* in one hand, and your *Carrot Stick* in your other hand. Use a Schwiagemutter look and approach your horse from about 10 feet away, tapping the ground with your *Carrot Stick* like a blind man going towards his chest (this would be *Phase 1*).

If he doesn't begin to move when you're within a few feet, start tapping the ground more vigorously (*Phase 2*). If he still doesn't move he'll now start to feel the taps getting increasingly stronger on his chest (*Phases 3 and 4*)!

At any time your horse starts to move backwards, quit immediately, smile, and wait. Give him time to think about what just happened, then begin again at *Phase 1*. If you had to use *Phases 3 and 4* make sure you give those spots a friendly rub.

Remember that it's the Schwiagemutter look that you'll use to drive your horse, and a smiling relaxed look that you'll use when you want to rub your horse. Horses use

these same looks to communicate with each other! So if you approach your horse to rub him but he misreads you and moves away, you might check what kind of look you're using!

Step 3. Draw your horse forwards from Zone 1.

This step will help your horse learn to come forward to you at your suggestion.

Walk backwards, smile, comb the underside of your rope with your *Carrot Stick* and reel the horse in towards you as you keep backing away. It's like playing the *The Friendly Game*^{#1} by rubbing the rope and it helps your horse see the difference between a *Driving Stick* and a *Friendly Stick* on the rope.



Step 4. Repeat Driving Backwards and Drawing Forwards.

Repeat driving backwards and forwards until your horse feels confident and moves with the lightest taps. Pretty soon you'll be able to just pretend to tap the rope and your horse will move backwards.

Step 5. Drive your horse's front end away (Zone 2).

When you moved your horse's front end in *The Porcupine Game*^{#2}, he felt the *Carrot Stick* press his hair as *Phase 1*. Now

in *The Driving Game*^{#3}, you will move your horse's front end by driving his AIR as *Phase 1*. He will only feel contact with the *Carrot Stick* if you have to increase your phases.

Stand near your horse's shoulder, facing your horse. Hold the *Carrot Stick* in two hands up in front of you at the same angle as his neck. (Your hands will be about two feet apart on the stick.) Have your lead rope held between both hands too so it lays along the stick but still gives him a little slack.

Stand at least two feet away from your horse. Use a Schwiagemutter look and start tapping the air with the length of the *Carrot Stick* (*Phase 1*), making a bit of commotion or your horse won't feel any energy coming toward him. Then step towards him slowly as you keep tapping the air (*Phase 2*). The moment he moves, stop, smile and rub his neck. If he doesn't move, keep stepping towards him until the stick is tapping him (*Phase 3*). If he still doesn't move, hold your feet still and tap progressively faster and harder until he does (*Phase 4*), then stop and rub.

Ask for just a step or two and gradually build to more and more until you're able to yield the front end in a full circle, 360 degrees. Don't try to do it all at once; you can do this over a few sessions if necessary.

Many horses try to walk forward instead of yield away. Simply jiggle the lead rope until he stops or backs up a little.

It's a bit like patting your head and rubbing your stomach but don't worry, it won't feel awkward for too long.

Step 6. Drive your horse's hind end away (Zone 4).

In this step your horse will learn to yield his hindquarters away from your suggestion.

Hold the *12-foot Line* in the hand closest to your horse's head. Hold your *Carrot Stick* by the handle in your other hand. Use a Schwiagemutter look toward his hip/*Zone 4*, lean forward a little, and approach his hip like a Border Collie, slowly moving around him in a wide arc. (*Stay out wide, you don't need to get in close to his body. You need to stay out of range to be safe.*)



As you approach, start tapping the ground vigorously like a blind man towards his hip. Once again, make a commotion so there is energy in the stick and the air around it.

As he yields his hindquarters his head should face toward you. The moment he steps away and looks at you, stand up, stop, smile and rub his head with your hand. Pretty quickly he'll figure out that the game is to keep facing

you, and if he doesn't you'll sneak up on his hindquarters!

If he doesn't yield his hindquarters but turns his head away and tries to leave, shorten your rope so his head is tipped towards you and keep approaching his hip, tapping with the end of the *Carrot Stick*. If your horse doesn't move his hindquarters he will run into the tapping. If you are consistent with the tapping this way, he will think it was his fault that he ran into it. The instant he turns his hips away and looks at you, stop, smile and rub.

To ensure that you can still be friendly with the hip (*Zone 4*), smile, walk casually down your horse's side with the *Carrot Stick* outstretched and rub him all the way to his hip.

If he won't stand still, start rubbing at the neck and work your way to the hip, allowing him to drift until he feels confident enough to stand still. Then stop.

Ask for just a step or two and gradually build to more and more until you're able to yield the hindquarters in a full circle, 360 degrees. Don't try to do it all at once, you can do this over a few sessions if necessary.

Once you can do all these *Driving* yields easily with the



Carrot Stick, try doing them with just your hands up in front of you (as *Phase 1*) like you are rhythmically tapping the air toward your horse. You can also try using the end of your 12-foot *Line* (swinging or shaking the end of it), using the same expression, rhythm and phases.

Teaching your horse with the *Carrot Stick* first helps both of you learn more quickly and easily and it also helps you stay out of range to remain safe.

Any time he gets worried, just smile and return to *The Friendly Game*^{#1}. Don't be in a hurry, there's no need to rush things.



Using your hands to drive the horse backwards



Using your hands to drive the front end around

Pitfalls



Going too fast and not giving the horse a chance to work out what's happening. Move with purpose but slowly enough to give the horse time to think and act. If you go too quickly you'll just spook him.

-  *Going too slowly* so the horse doesn't realize there is any need for him to move away.
-  *Avoiding tapping your horse if he doesn't move.* Think of it this way: it's his job to get out of the way, to read the situation and know what's coming. Most horses get this figured out after just one or two attempts.
-  *Not using phases:* Try to make a point of starting as softly as you can and then progressively getting firmer until you are effective. Remember there are *Four Phases of Friendly Firmness*. At *Level 1*, give each phase about three seconds before going to the next, that way your horse knows what to expect and you can be more clear with your phases.

Troubleshooting

-  *Your horse will not move when you play The Driving Game#3.*
-  You need to find *Phase 4*. If a horse was threatening to kick and the other horse didn't move away, he'd then deliver the kick! This is what you will do with *Phases*, starting as softly as possible and gradually upping the pressure until you make contact. If you don't make contact, your horse will think you're just waving stuff around and it becomes *The Friendly Game#1*.

You need intention and you need to get the horse to

believe you are alpha: move or I'll bite/kick! The bite or kick with your *Carrot Stick* comes when you keep tapping progressively more strongly until he decides he should move away... then stop instantly and rub him.

Note: "Bomb proof" horses are usually pretty desensitized to all sorts of stimuli around humans. You need to now modify that so he's still bomb proof but is sensitive to communication.

-  *When you try to back your horse he ducks his head and moves around instead of backwards.*
-  You just have to be quicker than your horse is... and the *Carrot Stick* can be very quick. Study his pattern, how he does it, at what angle, how quickly... and then 'be there' a moment before he is and block it with the same intensity as he is using to duck out! If you can block him three times in a row, it's usually over. Horses win these games by being quicker than people so you just have to prove to him that you are the quicker one.
-  *Your horse ignores you or just wants to eat grass when you play The Driving Game#3.*
-  It sounds as though you don't make contact when playing *Blind Man* and your horse ignores you! The best thing to do here is simply play your games and get to *Phase 4* quickly every time your horse eats grass and

ignores you. It is okay to allow him to eat for a while (*Friendly Game*^{#1}) and then start on from there.

☹ Your horse lunges at you when you play *The Driving Game*^{#3}.

😊 If your horse comes at you, this is just dominance games and your reaction should be a very strong *Yo-Yo Game*^{#4} (next lesson) to get him to respect your space. Better get through all the rest of the games QUICK so you have more strategies for this clever horse.

Note: When you and your horse become more advanced with this game in *Levels 2 and 3*, it will only take *Phase 1* for your horse to respond! But your goal here in *Level 1* is to just have your horse understand what rhythmic pressure means. When he starts to move at *Phase 2* or *3* you know you are doing well!

Check List for The Driving Game^{#3}

☐ You can make a backward yield, front end yield, and hind end yield without touching your horse.

Success Map

Place a check mark on your *Success Map* indicating that you have completed *The Driving Game*^{#3} section of *Lesson 7*.

Game 4 – The Yo-Yo Game^{#4}

Beginning the Purpose Games

The Purpose Games 4,5,6 and 7 combine elements of Games 1, 2 and 3 so you can start doing more creative and active things with your horse and at more of a distance.

The *Yo-Yo Game*^{#4} is the first “purpose” game you will play to get your horse to back away and then come back to you. It’s like having your horse on a Yo-Yo! It combines *The Driving Game*^{#3} for going backwards and *The Porcupine Game*^{#2} for coming forwards.

This is a great game for your horse to learn because going backwards causes horses to ‘think.’ If your horse is ‘thinking’ rather than just ‘reacting’ he will become more respectful and put more effort into everything you ask of him.

Before you start playing the *Yo-Yo Game*^{#4}, you will need to learn some new rope handling techniques.

Learning to USE your 12-foot line effectively with phases and hinges

Objective

★ To be able to ‘wiggle’ your 12-foot Line using polite phases of increasing pressure. These phases will give your horse time to think and respond.

Tools

 Halter, 12-foot Line, a fence or sturdy chair.

Directions

With your *Halter* and 12-foot *Line* attached to a fence or sturdy chair:

Hold the end of your line in one hand so it looks like an extension of your finger if you were to 'point' it down the line toward your horse. Hold the very end of the rope like this, allowing only the leather popper to hang out the back of your hand.



In using the phases you will learn to use your arm like it has four hinges: 1. at the finger; 2. at the wrist; 3. at the elbow, and; 4. at the shoulder.

Phase 1 – Let the middle, or 'belly' of the rope, lay on the ground and with your arm outstretched, point your finger toward your "horse" (the fence or chair in this case). Wiggle your finger from side to side at your



simulated horse for a few seconds. Notice there is no 'life' in your rope yet, it is just in your finger.

Phase 2 – Close your finger and hold the line in your fist. Wiggle your fist from the wrist without moving your arm. You'll notice the rope will start to come to life but not lift off the ground yet.



Phase 3 – Bend your arm at the elbow and sweep your lower arm from side to side keeping your elbow still. This will now affect the rope to the point where it comes off the ground and the horse can feel it wiggling.



Phase 4 – Straighten your arm and lock your elbow straight. Sweep your whole arm from side to side. The rope will now respond in great waves and your horse will really feel it!



If you can, try simulating this with a friend. Put yourself

in the position of the horse by holding the halter nose piece with two hands and experience how dramatically different each phase feels. Horses learn that the phases are consistent and therefore are predictable. This will cause them to start to respond at lower and lower phases.

Your release or *quit* is just as important. It tells the horse when he is right. The horse will get lighter and more responsive as long as you can quit immediately – the *instant* he responds. Practice being able to stop during each phase, training yourself to be able to quit or lighten up the moment the horse responds.

When you have practiced this technique, you will be ready to start playing the *Yo-Yo Game*^{#4} with your horse.

Game 4 – The Yo-Yo Game^{#4}

This is called *The Yo-Yo Game*^{#4} because it involves two motions – forward and back – both being equal, just like a yo-yo goes up and down! You need to teach your horse to go backwards and come forwards easily and on an increasingly straight line. Remember, the *Yo-Yo Game*^{#4} combines *The Porcupine Game*^{#2} for coming forward and *The Driving Game*^{#3} for going backwards which will be important to remember should you encounter any problems. This will likely be your first experience of seeing how difficulties in a new activity can be solved by

improving upon the first three games.

You will be putting pressure in front of the horse – in *Zone 1* – from which he will learn to yield backwards.

Some horses are very sensitive and won't need much wiggling (*Phase 2 or 3*). Others will make you feel as if your arm is going to fall off (*Phase 4*)!

Some horses will go backwards with difficulty but come forward easily. Others will go backwards easily but have trouble coming forward.

Some horses have trouble with both!

The Yo-Yo Game^{#4} is designed to teach your horse to go backwards and come forwards with equal ease and willingness.

Objectives

- ★ To equalize forwards and backwards.
- ★ To teach your horse to be straight.
- ★ To help him become more comfortable and athletic when backing up.
- ★ To set the stage for transitions of gait. Every time you do a transition to a slower gait it is in a sense, going backwards. Horses with a lot of "go" are usually terrible at backing up let alone slowing down.

- ★ To transfer weight carriage more to the hindquarters and form the foundation of good stops, and at higher Levels, more collected maneuvers.
- ★ To teach your horse the principle of not pulling back against pressure; to understand and yield to pressure felt behind the head. This game therefore is a key to helping claustrophobic horses with a tendency to pull back. It helps them learn how to move toward the pressure instead of fighting it.

Tools

 Halter and 12-foot Line.

Directions

Draw a circle in the dirt around your feet, about three feet in diameter. This is to remind you to stay in one place and *not move your feet!* It's important in this game to keep your feet still. It will help you learn how to move your horse without moving your feet. Your horse will gain more respect for you because horses play a dominance game that's won according to "who moves who!"

The Yo-Yo Game^{#4} is a "long range" game, therefore you need to move your horse away from you before beginning the rope wiggling.

Using your hands, play *The Driving Game*^{#3} to move your horse backwards and out of reach, about four feet from you.

Start with *Phase 1 - Finger hinge*. Look at your horse sternly (Schwiegermutter look). Wiggle your finger toward him and think "you need to back-up!" Remember, the rope does not move at this phase, your finger is the only thing that is moving.

If your horse doesn't move (he's probably not even looking at you!) count three seconds and advance to *Phase 2*.

Phase 2 - Wrist hinge. Close your finger, make an upright fist and wiggle it from side to side, the wrist only. You'll see the motion start to travel toward the middle of the rope and your horse will notice it wiggling. If he still does not respond, count three seconds and advance to *Phase 3*.

Phase 3 - Elbow hinge. Bend your arm at the elbow, lock your wrist and swing your lower arm from side to side in front of your body. This will now be very obvious to your horse and he'll feel the motion and pressure of the wiggling rope all the way to the snap of the 12-foot Line.

If he still does not respond, count three seconds and advance to *Phase 4*.

Phase 4 - Shoulder hinge. Straighten your arm and lock your elbow so your whole arm moves from the shoulder

down. In this position you can send big sweeping waves down the *12-foot Line* and it creates quite a bit of discomfort in *Zone 1*. Your horse will *want* to move backwards away from it.

Make sure that when you get to *Phase 3 and 4* you are actually sending energy down the rope to your horse which is more effective than just wiggling; it's like wiggling with purpose! That energy has to come out of you and down your long, rope finger until it reaches the horse and makes an impact.

At any moment your horse begins to move backwards, quit immediately, smile, relax, and give him time to think about what just happened.

Note: If you have to go to *Phase 4* and your horse goes sideways, forwards, or does not move at all, you will need to keep *Phase 4* wiggling until he finally tries to move backwards. If you quit wiggling while he's going sideways, or forwards, or while he's not moving, he'll think that you want sideways or forwards, or for him to not move. Keep wiggling until he starts to move backwards, then quit. This is the only way he'll know that backwards is the right right thing to do.

Important Note



If you remember the section in your *Theory Guide* on *Understanding Equine Psychology* that discusses comfort and discomfort being primary motivators for the horse, you'll realize the importance of rewarding the slightest try no matter what phase you are using.

By stopping the stimulus instantly and smiling (yes, smiling!) you will show your horse that to achieve comfort, all he has to do is step back. Work on yourself to develop your timing on this.

The slightest try can be identified as a weight shift backwards in your horse's body, not even moving his feet.

The next try will be half a step... then a full step. If you can patiently acknowledge and build on those first few tries your horse will feel like a winner and try harder for you the next time. This is because he becomes confident in knowing how to gain comfort and will look for it sooner and sooner, especially if you are consistent and accurate with your phases. You are aiming for this to eventually take no more than the wiggle of your finger – *Phase 1*.

When your horse has backed almost to the end of the rope, relax and smile and see if he'll stop. If not, just hold

steady until he does. Remember he's just learning so he probably won't do it right the first time. That's okay, you'll get to repeat it until he does.

When he's stopped, wait for a good count of 10 to 30 seconds before asking him to come in to you. This 'rest time' after he has backed to the end of the rope is like a reward. If he knows he gets to rest at the end of the rope, he'll look forward to backing out to the end of the rope!

To bring him back in to you, smile and start combing the rope through your hands, hand over hand, gradually increasing the drag on it and lightening up every time your horse moves toward you. This combing action will prevent you from jerking on the horse or pulling him in, it acts like more of a draw.

To bring your horse forward to you, there are also Four Phases

Phase 1 - smile, bend towards your horse and comb the rope towards you with flat, open hands, hand-over-hand, palms up, in an inviting, smooth and rhythmic way.

Phase 2 - put a little drag into the rope by closing your fingers slightly - but keep the same combing rhythm.

Phase 3 - put more drag into the rope so it feels insistent - keep the same combing rhythm going.

Phase 4 - lock on with hands tightly closed. Stand in a

power position. Hold fast but don't pull, and *wait* until the horse gives. *The instant he gives* and stops pulling back, OPEN YOUR HANDS AND SMILE, no matter what phase you are using. Your horse will learn that it is *his* responsibility to give and yield to the pressure, and that he is in control of finding comfort through yielding.

When he comes back in to you, give him a friendly rub and let him rest for a few seconds again. This also acts as a reward that will give him incentive to come back in to you.

By using the *Four Phases* to bring your horse in, one day your horse will come to you at *Phase 1*, and some day you'll not even need the rope (in *Levels 2 & 3*).

Once you can get your horse to go backwards and come forwards, only then should you put more emphasis on straightness. Don't be too critical at first or it will discourage your horse from trying.

This exercise is particularly important for preparing a horse to learn to stand tied up because he learns to yield to the pressure rather than pull back against it.

Pitfalls



Porcupine Game#2 and Driving Game#3 not being good enough. This will affect how well your horse plays and learns The Yo-Yo Game#4.

 *Moving your feet!* In Horseville, he who moves his feet is not the leader! Horses will dominate each other by causing the other to move away. You need to keep your feet still and discover how to influence your horse from a greater distance away. This will develop your timing and reflexes and increase your horse's respect for you. Stay inside your circle!

To help you keep your feet in one place: draw a little circle around you on the ground; step on a Frisbee, or stand inside a tire or hula hoop. Until you give yourself this visible target you probably won't realize how much you actually drift!

 *Shaking the leather popper of the rope at your horse.* You need to hold the end of the rope so that it looks like an extension of your finger. The leather popper should fall out the back of your hand *away* from your horse. You want to convince your horse that you have a very long finger (the rope that extends from your hand to your horse's halter) that can touch him if he doesn't respond.

 *Starting at Phase 4.* Be very conscious about always starting at *Phase 1*, and progressing from there as required. Not only is it more polite but it makes your horse more sensitive and perceptive to your communication.

 *Bringing your horse in again immediately rather than allowing your horse to 'arrive.'* Give him a short spell after he has backed up so he has a sense of purpose, that he was headed for a certain spot. Same thing when bringing him in – rub him for a while so he feels good about coming back to you. This will give him some incentive. If you just back him out and bring him in, he'll get more reluctant to back up.

Troubleshooting: backing up

 *Your horse will not go backwards.*

 If you are certain you used the *Four Phases* and still did not get a result, go back to *The Driving Game*^{#3} in *Zone 1*. Make sure your horse can go backwards easily when you tap the air in front of him (*Zone 1*) and on the rope or his chest with your *Carrot Stick* (see *The Driving Game*^{#3}). If you can't get him to back up with *The Driving Game*^{#3} it will make starting *The Yo-Yo Game*^{#4} more difficult.

Once your horse finally backs out to the end of the rope, leave him there for half a minute or longer. This will reinforce his reason for backing up. He is going to a place of comfort. In the future, he won't need quite so much time out there – unless that's what you want.

 *Your horse takes just a couple of steps, won't go any farther.*

😊 If your horse gets stuck simply escalate your phases until he starts moving again and then either quit or retreat to *Phase 1* so he knows he should keep on backing until the end of the rope.

😞 Your horse gets to the end of the rope and tries to keep backing, even pulls you out of your circle!

😊 Drag with him but have a soft look on your face. Your horse is just a bit confused and this will pass. It's common for horses that tend to pull back to do this so don't trap him, allow a little drift.

😞 Your horse backs up crooked.

😊 Once your horse understands what is required of him when you wiggle the rope you can start being more particular about straightness (although more of this is addressed in *Level 2*). Crookedness is usually the horse's reluctance to back up, so when he drags or goes crooked, come up your phases a bit quicker so he responds more quickly. At *Level 1*, don't get too worried. *Level 2* is where you will get it beautifully straight.

From the early years of handling and leading to the later years of saddling and bridling, horses are handled predominantly from the left side. They are defensive of their right side and if you become more observant you'll see that many horses will place themselves in such a way

that they only present their left side and left eye to you.

Getting your horse more even sided using all of *The Seven Games* will help a lot so don't just try to fix this problem by repeating *The Yo-Yo Game*^{#4}. Use the first three games even more so, especially *The Friendly Game*^{#1} on the right side.

Troubleshooting: coming forwards

😞 Your horse will not come forward and actually pulls back when you get to *Phase 4*, holding the rope.

😊 If your horse starts to go backwards when you are holding *Phase 4*, drag with him, stay in your power position, but KEEP THE SAME AMOUNT OF PRESSURE ON THE ROPE, DON'T INCREASE IT. By keeping the pressure the same and dragging your feet you will teach him that this response is unsuccessful and he should try something else. Pulling harder can cause a horse to panic.

As soon as he tries to come forward, even just stops pulling backwards, release, smile, wait a moment then begin again at *Phase 1*.

If he just stays there, you'll need to hold that same pressure and find an additional way to increase the discomfort so it affects his decision to stay there...

Examples: swing the end of your rope out to your side

thereby influencing *Zone 3* (not *Zone 1*) or use a *Carrot Stick* and *Savvy String* to flick the ground with rhythm, getting closer and closer until it touches *Zone 3*. Your intention is not to hurt him but to cause him to feel uncomfortable. You can also start tapping on the rope itself just to get his feet unstuck, even if at first he goes backwards some more.

If you still have problems, check the quality of your *Porcupine Game*^{#2} because you're asking for a yield in *Zone 2* that in turn influences the feet to move. See if you can hold just the base of the halter and ask him to step forward and follow the feel toward you. Repeat this until he understands that pressure behind his head at the top of *Zone 2* means move your feet forward to follow the feel toward the release.

☹ Your horse rears up.

☺ This can happen both when asking a resistant horse to go backwards, or when asking him to come forwards and he's resisting the pressure.

If your horse rears when asked to go backwards it's because he's confused. When horses get confused they instinctively want to run away. His hind legs become engaged for flight and with the pressure still coming from *Zone 1*, the only place left is up.

Don't worry about this and don't make the horse feel

wrong. What's important is that you maintain that phase (don't get stronger, you are already causing enough discomfort) even while he is in the air.

Whatever you do, don't stop. It's when you give him comfort that he learns he's done the right thing so don't stop until the front feet touch the ground again.

Then calmly begin again at *Phase 1*. If backwards is still difficult, refer to the first point in this troubleshooting section about going back to *The Driving Game*^{#3}.

If your horse rears when asked to come forward, he is probably reacting against the pressure behind his ears.

This horse probably also has a tendency to pull back.

There are two things to be mindful of:

That you don't pull against your horse to the point that you cause him to flip over backwards, and;

That you are TEACHING your horse to come forward, rather than FORCING him. Be sure that you are ready to open your hands and allow the rope to slip if he should rear up so you release pressure and don't cause him to pull against it even more and flip over. Once his front feet are on the ground, smile and begin again. Be prepared to go a little slower to help your horse understand that he's not being threatened and rather than doggedly repeating the *Yo-Yo Game*^{#4}, solve the

problem with your *Driving Game*^{#3} or *Porcupine Game*^{#2}.

☹ Your horse goes crooked when coming forward to you.

☺ This is easier to correct than the crooked backwards problem! Again it's usually the horse trying to keep you on one side, avoiding looking at you with two eyes because he's not confident enough yet. The best solution is to reel him in faster, get your hands moving faster, and make the countermoves by positioning your hands on the opposite side of his deviation as you reel him in - if he's drifting to your left, take your hands more to the right. If you are consistent with this it will quickly teach your horse to come in straight. Remember to lighten up every time he tries to be right!

Check List for The Yo-Yo Game^{#4}

- ☐ You can back your horse using *The Yo-Yo Game*^{#4}, wiggling no more than at *Phase 3* to get him all the way to the end of the 12-foot Line. He moves back in a fairly straight line and stops there for a minimum of 5 seconds until you ask him in again.
- ☐ You can bring your horse in at *Phase 1* or *2*, also in a fairly straight line.

Success Map

Place a check mark on your Success Map indicating that you have completed *The Yo-Yo Game*^{#4} section of *Lesson 7*.

How do you know if you are ready to move on?

Well, if you are reading this page – congratulations! You have crossed the highest peaks in the learning process for *Level 1*. There are still challenges to come, but go forward knowing that you have already learned the most important keys to solving them along the way.

You now have a few tasks to assess your progress before moving to *Pocket Guide 4*. It won't take long and you'll gain much from the confidence of knowing you are genuinely ready to begin your next steps.

First you will benefit from now watching an actual student doing the first seven tasks in the *Level 1 assessment*. Everything you have done up until this point has prepared you for these tasks.

It is important at this time that you COMPARE YOUR PERFORMANCE ONLY TO STUDENTS AT YOUR OWN LEVEL.

After watching this DVD chapter it will be time to assess where you and your horse are in relation to the quality for *Games 1, 2, 3* and *4* at a *Level 1* standard. The assessment tasks for *Level 1* are provided for you in your *Log Book*. The tasks that you should now be able to perform are:

Liberty tasks: 1, 2 and 3 and *On-Line* tasks: 1, 2, 3 and 4.

This assessment is to INFORM YOU about your progress:

You want to know:

- ☐ How close are you to achieving these tasks?
- ☐ How far have you come in the amount of time you have personally had to spend on these lessons?
- ☐ How far have you come given the nature of your horse and your own efforts as a learner?
- ☐ You may assess that you and your horse need more sessions of play with the first four games. If that is the case then you will be very clear where you are and what you are aiming for. It might be that only one of the tasks needs more improvement.
- ☐ You may assess that what you are doing is a close match to what is expected.

Viewing assignment

Play DVD-2, Chapter 5, and watch the segment with Linda and Matt titled, "Matt and Luke's Level 1 Assessment, Tasks 1-7."

When you are done viewing this Chapter, return here.

When you feel you can play the games the way you see them played by Matt and his horse, or feel you are very close you **SHOULD MOVE ON!***

Do not get stuck in *Level 1* trying to make the first four

games and other skills look like Pat Parelli who is studying *Level 9*! All the *Levels* are part of developing those skills, not just *Level 1*.

We would even say **YOU MUST** move on because there is no learning value for you or your horse in more repetition with *Games 1, 2, 3 and 4* as the direct focus. If you do this you'll turn the *Seven Games* into the **SEVEN JOBS**! These games will improve naturally as you play them as part of your warm ups. They will also improve when you learn and begin to teach your horse *Games 5 through 7* and start getting creative with the games (as shown in the "*Challenges and Tasks*" section in your *Log Book*).

Again, this is not the time to work more on *Games 1, 2, 3 and 4*. It is time to let the nature of learning take its course. You will revisit these games for improvement in *Level 2*. That is the next right time for you to do so!

You are now ready to move on to Pocket Guide 4

**If your horse is very difficult and you are having trouble teaching him the games, we suggest you seek the help of a Parelli Professional. On DVD-3, Chapter 1 there is a segment with Linda titled "Right Brain Behavior requires SAVVY!" This segment is not intended to teach you how to handle this yourself, but to help you identify what extreme right brain behavior looks like and how much "Seven Games Savvy" it takes to handle it.*